Selected by LYDIA ANN BAKER.

WHY DO THEY NOT SEE THE LIGHT?

Dear sister, you sorrow with me
For those who behold not the light;
Though brightly it shines upon us,
It seems to be hid from their sight.

God's servants as faithfully strove
To point it to them, as to you;
And yet, though 'tis shining so clear,
It seems to be hid from their view.

They worship the God we adore,
And cheerfully lay at his feet
Their substance, time, talent, their *all*,
Yet the offering seems still incomplete.

But He who is faithful and just,
And notes e'en the sparrows that fall,
Who numbers the hairs of onr head,
And gave the great Ransom for all,

Will first send his bright angels forth
To seal all the servants of God;
And thus, in his own wondrous way,
Save all those who trust in his word.

For those who their Lord truly love
Will pray that his will be revealed;
And in his good time, from the meek,
Humble seeker, 'twill not be concealed.

No! Satan shall never exult
O'er one faithful servant expelled;
Nor say that from one feeble lamb,
The great Shepherd's care was withheld.

When Jesus desired to feed
The weary and hungering throng.
The fishes and loaves were but few,
The way to the village was long.

He seated them for their repast,
And blessed that provision so small;
Which, when the disciples gave forth,
Lo, 't was found enough for them all.

So now he has chosen a few,
The "meat in due season" to give;
Then let us be true to our trust,
That many, partaking, may live.

The Sunday School Service,

April 27th, 1884.

A. D. GNAGEY.

Abstinence for the Sake of Others.—1 Cor. 8:1—13. Time, 57, A. D

GOLDEN. TEXT: If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.—1 Cor. 8:13.

Introduction: The Church at Corinth had many difficulties to contend with. The city was largely composed of heathens, and the great majority of the Corinthian converts had been worshipers of idols before their conversion to the revelation of Jesus Christ. A few of them were Jews. It seems that the conduct of some of these brethren when in company with the unconverted heathens was wanting in proper respect for their fellow brethren, especially weak ones. When animals were sacrificed, some of the flesh was offered on the altar, the other divided between the priests and worshipers. Feasts in the temples, at which all enjoyed themselves, were common on such occasions. Some of this meat was sold in the market, and thus people in their own homes ate meat that was sacrificed. Is it right or wrong, was the question which Paul was called to settle. Is it the *principle* on which his decision rests, that interests us and demands our study.

Verses 1, 6. Two great influences are contrasted and brought out in this chapter,—Knowledge and Love. "We know that we all have knowledge." Paul had preached to them on the evil of idolatry, showing its error, in supposing that the author of our being dwells in temples made by hands or that there is a plurality of gods. Read his sermon on Mars' Hill to the people of Athens, Acts 17:22, 32. Paul's argument to the Corinthian brethren is, that they know idols are nothing. It is a mere piece of wood, or a stone fashioned into the image of a god. An idol represents nothing, for there is but one God, our common Father, and him we know and may know through Christ Jesus, not through idols, images made of wood and stone.

Not all "knowledge puffeth up;" only inperfect knowledge. True knowledge is the very opposite. The most knowing men in the world, or at least some of them, have been the most humble. When a man gains the right kind of knowledge, he then only learns how small he is, what an insignigcant figure in this vast universe. The idea that ignorance is essential to true humility is absurd. Ignorance is the *parent* of pride; it begets it as naturally as "love begets love," and yet there are those who oppose education on this very ground, that it has a tendency to make people proud, puffed up. Nothing is farther from the truth. When a man gets a knowledge of his own being, when he learns how much there *is* to learn in this world, and how little he yet knows, *such* knowledge will not puff up, it humiliates. The more knowledge a man possesses, if it is the right kind, the more humble will he be. What makes a man "feel big" as we call it? A want of knowledge of his own littleness and unworthiness. What induces men to set themselves up as "leaders?" What is the cause of that secret desire to rule, that ambition which makes use of unlawful means, that resorts to evil arts and to all manner of trickery in order to gain position and power? What makes a man feel that he is a fit judge of his fellow-men? An utter lack of knowledge, a want of a knowledge of his own inability; his weakness, his unfitness, his nothingness. Who is that man that knows everything? Why, the man who knows nothing, who does not know what there *is* to learn, the man who must yet learn the first elements of knowledge. I know a minister who claimed he knew all about Greek, when he had learned the Greek word for, and the meaning of *baptize* in its various forms.

The knowledge that puffeth up is that knowledge that knows not its nothingness. Almost invariably, the man who knows everything, is the man who knows nothing. The first thing for a man to learn in this world, is that he knows nothing; when this lesson is learned, then he may add knowledge without fear of puffing up.

Ignorance, pride and superstition are very closely related. The first may be said to be the parent of the other two. Hence to destroy ignorance would be killing pride and superstition. They have a common enemy. That enemy is education. When the latter holds sway the others cannot survive. They will not mix.

"Ignorance is the parent of destruction."
"Pride goeth before a fall,"
"Superstition is faith without knowledge."

Education is a death blow to all three, and if we would kill pride and superstition we *must* educate.

Verses 7—13. Some of the Corinthian brethren were not fully instructed as to the evils of idolatry. They had worshipped idols for a long time, and they were slow to renounce their belief in the real existence of the false divinities represented by these idols. They were not wilfully ignorant. Idolatry had become a second nature to them, and though they were converted to Christ, they still had not fully renounced their faith in idols. Now those who *knew* there was nothing in idols, that meat offered to them was like any other meat, attended feasts in the idol temples and ate meat that had been sacrificed. The few who still had a hankering after idolatry felt that this practice was sanctioning its worship, and if they would see others at these feasts enjoying themselves, they would feel like joining them, and thus defile their conscience by doing what conscience did not endorse.

Now what is to be done? We know that these idols are not gods, for there is only one God. They are mere material; the temple only a building and the meat sacrificed is not unlike any other meat. It's no advantage to eat it and none to let it alone. May we not use our liberty of conscience; so said those who had knowledge. But now, this knowledge apart from love may be harmful. Knowledge that seeks *self* only is of little value. It must be amalgamated with love, which is a more powerful influence, to be useful. Knowledge is a good thing, but love must guide and lead us to a proper use of it. A razor is a good thing; barbers make a living with it; but it must be handled carefully. In the hands of a madman it is a very dangerous instrument. Grain is indispensable to man. We live by it; for the want of it we die of famine. But in the hands of some people it is converted into a liquid, and kills thousands of our fellow-men every year, sends men to drunkard's graves, destroys the peace and hallowed joy in many families, clothes thousands every year in rags and reduces them to poverty, floods earth with tears and bathes it it sorrow, makes widows and orphans and is the cause of more evil than everything else. Shall we, therefore, raise no more grain? Certainly raise it, but teach people so to use it as to be useful to themselves and others. So with knowledge. No man can have too much of it. But when men seek knowledge for their own *use only*, they are actuated by improper motives. The object of gaining knowledge should be to become useful to ourselves *and* to society in general. Of what use is a well developed brain when its powers are not employed? The miser's gold is hid under a rock, and is of no earthly use to any one save its owner, and to him only so far as it gratifies a slavish desire for possessions. Money must be put in *circulation* to be of use to the public. So must our knowledge. And our lesson teaches this truth. Back of our knowledge there must be a motive power to put it "on the go," to set it in motion, send it out and assist fallen humanity in its efforts to grow better, to alleviate the sufferings of man, assist in overcoming temptations, help poor, weak men till they become strong, and to lead strong men to their task.

It seems to me a wrong application is made of Paul's teaching in this narrative. Some people *study* how they may be offended and then quote Paul who would not eat meat while the world stands if it should offend his brother. But is it not clear that Paul's teachings is, to abstain from whatever has evil connected with it for the sake of those who have not a proper knowledge of good and evil. Idols are nothing. They may be touched without defilement. They are dead things and in themselves are as harmless as doves. Some of the Corinthians knew this. Some did *not* know it. To them it looked like a return to idolatry to attend a feast where sacrificed meat was eaten. Keep from all idolatry therefore, from everything that has the appearance of evil, though in itself it may be no evil, but for other's sake. You might enter the saloon and take a drink without harm to yourself, for you know when you have enough liquor; you know that the bar room itself is powerless; it's only a room, as meat is meat; but look at the evil connected with it; it has the appearance of evil, and its appearance does not deceive. You are the means of leading others in; the influence you exert is degrading, and for the sake of your brethren, for the sake of their souls, for the sake of your profession, for the sake of your dear Savior, brethren keep out of those dark places. The true Christian, impressed with a proper sense of his position, and his responsibility *will never go into a drinking saloon*, either alone or in company with others. The influence is demoralizing, and is not a place for a Christian. You say, "It won't hurt me to go there," maybe not, but act on Paul's advice and stay away for other's sake. If you cannot do that, then the knowledge you possess "puffeth up." It is selfish. It seeks self only. It is not actuated by love, which should characterize the Christian in all he does.

"Knowledge is power." This is true. It is a power for good or for evil, depending on the "main-spring." When actuated by love it is a wondrons power for good, but when selfishness lies at the bottom it works destruction. Knowledge and love are the two influences made prominent in this lesson. Love is the stronger. It lifts up, not puffs up. It purifies, it elevates, it ennobles. Knowledge is the tool; love handles it. Knowledge makes us free; love uses our liberty for the good of others. We want no freedom without love; that would be letting the murderer, the thief and the robber run loose. Bondage to self is the worst master in the world; so is liberty without love; but no freedom, no love; the two are marred.

From the MESSENGER OF PEACE.

IF WE SIN AGAINST GOD WE WRONG OURSELVES.

BY JOHN HEMMANWAY.

We wrong ourselves. as well as sin against God, if we indulge malicious and murderous deeds of the mind or life. The apostle says: "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." Now, how melancholy is it that many persons cannot say with the Patriarch Job that they never rejoice in the destruction or misfortunes of any that hate them, whether they be personal or national enemies. All allowance in the mind, and all deeds that are of cruel or revengeful nature, make us murderers in the sight of God, and in all such thoughts and conduct we not only greatly sin against God our kind Father, and the human family, but we mightily wrong ourselves, for we deprive ourselves of the sweet and exalted felicity which continually flows in and out of the noble and philanthropic souls of those men and women who find the highesf joy of their lives in singing by their thoughts, prayers and labors from day to day, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will toward men."

Now, let us never forget that if we cannot slay our fellow beings and still love them as a tender mother loves her children, even as we love ourselves, we greatly sin against God and wrong ourselves. If we are required by a holy God, who cannot err, to love ourselves so carefully and deeply that we are not allowed to destroy ourselves for any purpose—if suicide or the destruction of our own lives intentionally is always a horrible and atrocious crime against God and ourselves, which he will in no case excuse, and if God requires us to love all men as we love ourselves, then surely we cannot, on the battle field or elsewhere, for any purpose, take the life of man. If man can not lawfully destroy his own life, he can not rightly destroy any other man's life, for he must love all men as himself, and do to all men as he would have them do unto him. This is the moral philosophy of the gospel as written in the New Testament.

How strikingly true is the fact that they who take the sword perish by the sword, as our Savior, the Prince of Peace, told in admonitory language, his belligerent disciple, Peter. Alas, how greatly do those who take the sword sin against the Lord Jesus Christ, and do great violence against the best interests of the human race, and ruin themselves often in body and soul forever. Yes, from every spot of earth and battlefield which have been red by human slaughter from the days of Cain to the present hour—through the long and dismal period of war and bloodshed, stretching across nearly sixty long centuries comes up a deep and frightful sepulchral voice from all parts of our war-cursed world, "He that slays his brother man wrongs his own soul."

Blessed be the God of peace and love, there is, in the future, a long, long period for mankind on earth when the sword shall not devour, and the nations shall learn war no more. That time of peace and love will surely come, for the word of the eternal God is sure. Then it will be seen by all men as it can and should be now seen by all the followers of Jesus, that war and sin are one and inseparable, and that all the disciples of a gentle and forgiving Savior who have engaged in war, have sinned grievously against their Lord and Master, and wronged their own souls out an amount of love, and peace, and joy worth infinitely more than all the military glory of earth. O, how sadly, how greatly do all those Christians who engage in war, or cherish a war spirit, wrong their own souls out of all the pure and loftly enjoyments of the Christian life. They can not exist in a bosom that indulges in the cruel spirit and deeds of war, or a love of military glory.

Christians, if you would be happy you must be peaceable and benevolent in your minds and life. You must, like your Savior, delight in "doing good." But there is no possible public way in which you can so greatly sin against God, and dishonor the Christian name and wrong your own souls as to engage in war, and cultivate a spirit of war in the community with its necessary consequences—a love of military glory.

To say nothing of the old world, how immensely has the American continent sinned against God and wronged the best interests of the inhabitants by the barbarous, shameful crime of war. Look at the cruel war against the poor aboriginal people, and the almost incessant wars and commotions in South America and Mexico, and our wars with France and Great Britain, and our recent civil war. Had it not been for these wars, all utterly inexcusable and unholy, as all wars are, and must necessarily be, this continent would now be a paradise of beauty and happiness, exceeding the day dreams of the novelist or the fancy of the poet. Had our ministers of the gospel and our literary men been in spirit and life like William Penn, the great and good, no wars would have desolated and demoralized this fair portion of the globe, and peace and love, virtue and prosperity, would now be here, in the new world, triumphant and universal.

But the question may be asked, "Were not some of these wars on the American continent necessary, and right, and unavoidable?" Yes, certainly, they were necessary and right and unavoidable, just as it was necessary and right and unavoidable for Cain to kill Abel. Cain wanted to kill Abel, and so he did, but he atrociously sinned against God, and it is to be feared he forever wronged his own soul. Yes, our wars—not some of them but all of them—were just as necessary, right and unavoidable, as rum is necessary and right and unavoidable to gratify the raging appetites of a drunkard, and no more so. If sin, if transgression of the holy laws of God is ever necessary and right, then war may be necessary and right, and not till then. When it is necessary and right to do evil, that good may come—that is, do wrong to obtain right—sin against God and man to obtain good, then war may be right.

But does not some good come sometimes out of war? Certainly, God can bring good out of evil, can cause even the wrath of man to praise him. Good has come out of the slave trade, and ship wrecks, and floods, and fires, and all the natural evils, and even the abominable sins of mankind. But shall we do or approve of evil that good may come, or because a God of infinite power, and love can overrule it for the glory of his name and for good to the human race? Never, never? Shall we justify the Jewish nations in rejecting and crucifying Christ because his death brought the greatest good that ever blessed our guilty, suffering world? God forbid.

Let us never approve or excuse war because we think good has or may come from its great criminality or suffering. Peace is always right and beautiful, and war is always wrong and hideous, and whoever, however sincerely, upholds war, sins against God, and against the true dignity and happiness of man.

It is uot good feeling alone that makes a good man, but a good purpose; not merely emotion, but a deep and abiding principle. Let a young man start out in life trusting only to his feelings, and he may land at the swine trough; but let a deep and guiding principle furnish the plan on which he builds, and an earnest, unflinching purpose animate the builder, and the edifice of character shall rise as truly and steadily as if it grew from the rock on which it was built.